

that in the earlier years of his career he meditated over the formation of a new party, that dream of youthful ambition in a perplexed and discordant age, but destined in English politics to be never more substantial than a vision. More experienced in political life, he became aware that he had only to choose between the Whigs and the Tories, and his sagacious intellect, not satisfied with the superficial character of these celebrated divisions, penetrated their interior and essential qualities, and discovered, in spite of all the affectation of popular sympathy on one side and of admiration of arbitrary power on the other, that this choice was in fact a choice between oligarchy and democracy. From the moment that Lord Bolingbroke, in becoming a Tory, embraced the national cause, he devoted himself absolutely to his party: all the energies of his Protean mind were lavished in their service; and although the ignoble prudence of the Whig Minister restrained him from advocating the cause of the nation in the Senate, it was his inspiring pen that made Walpole tremble in the recesses of the Treasury, and in a series of writings, unequalled in our literature for their spirited patriotism, their just and profound views, and the golden eloquence in which they are expressed, eradicated from Toryism all those absurd and odious doctrines which Toryism had adventitiously adopted, clearly developed its essential and permanent character, discarded *jure divino*, demolished passive obedience, threw to the winds the doctrine of non-resistance, placed the abolition of James and the accession of George on their right basis, and in the complete re-organisation of the public mind laid the foundation for the future accession of the Tory party to power, and to that popular and triumphant career which must ever await the policy of an administration inspired by the spirit of our free and ancient institutions.¹

Disraeli had steeped himself in the politics of the age of Anne and the early Georges, had studied Bolingbroke both in his career and in his writings, and drawn freely from the fund of political ideas which he found in him. The English Alcibiades has received something less than justice from the Whig writers who have given us our history, but whether he wholly deserved Disraeli's glowing eulogy is not now the question. It is not as an

¹ pp. 185-188.